

**Interagency Wildfire Management Team
Meeting Notes
May 31, 2006**

Doug Tucker (Los Alamos county Fire Department) reported that graduation weekend went well with only one unattended campfire reported in the county. The Red Flag campaign has received positive feedback and works to draw extra attention to the extreme fire conditions. Steve Shaw will contact Fire Marshal Mike Thompson about expanding the program for protecting the homes adjacent to Los Alamos Canyon.

Gary Kemp and Marla Rodgers (Bandelier National Monument) announced that fire crews are still in the area and performing initial attack. There are still a few stump holes burning within the Capulin Fire perimeter. Crews on the Capulin Fire witnessed unusual and intense fire behavior on Sunday afternoon, with the piñon/juniper woodlands exploding into flames. All trails at the monument are open and all campfires are banned. A new information site has just opened (www.nmfireinfo.com). This site is updated hourly with fire information and fire restrictions.

Sandy Hurlocker (Santa Fe National Forest) reported that several small fires, less than five acres, occurred last week. There were no fires reported over the holiday weekend. Firefighting resources are staged within the district and Stage II restrictions are still in place.

Manny L'Esperance (Emergency Response Office, LANL) is continuing to mitigate wildland fire hazards at LANL on a priority basis. Hazard trees on West Road and around the Ice Rink have been identified for removal. The Los Alamos Canyon near Fairway Drive is also under review.

Steve Shaw (MOSAIC, Los Alamos) will be the point of contact for the Fairway homeowners.

Craig Martin (Parks Division, Los Alamos County) reported that the County has contracted with Asplundh to continue removing hazard trees and mitigate areas within the County. About 400 hazardous trees have been removed since the first of the year. A survey of the Los Alamos Canyon/Fairway area revealed about 30 to 40 standing dead trees per acre. Blow down of live and dead trees continues to be a life safety problem.

The Climate Assessment for the Southwest project (CLIMAS), located at the Institute for the Study of Planet Earth, University of Arizona, reports through its May 2006 Outlook that drought has intensified in the Southwest to severe or extreme conditions. The precipitation levels have been less than 50 percent of average in most areas. The long-term moisture deficits and the abundant fine fuel produced by last year's wet winter point to severe fire conditions. Precipitation is expected to be about average through November. The bottom line is that drought is likely to persist and intensify over most of the Southwest.

For more information, see <http://www.ispe.arizona.edu/climas/forecasts.html>

The next IWMT meeting will be at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, June 14, at the EOC (TA-69, Building 33) in the Fire TAC Room (124). The IWMT meets every other week and these meetings are open to the public. Contact Randy Balice (balice@lanl.gov, 665-1270) for further information, or to get on the distribution list for these meeting notes.